



**Department Orders
Department of the Southwest
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War**



**DEPARTMENTAL ORDER 04
(SERIES 2023-2024)**

**Results of Department Last Soldier Project
Committee**

By the authority vested in me as Commander of the Department of the Southwest, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and as a follow-up to Department Order 003 issued April 13, 2023, I issue the following.

First, I wish to express extreme gratitude to Brothers Dennis Lamb, PPC1, Robert Irwin, RHGM2, and John Horton, USG3 for their comprehensive work on the Last Soldier Project Committee. Also, appreciation to the Camps and Brothers who aided the Committee.

After review of their report (see attached) I concur with their findings and do hereby order the following:

- Corporal Francis Marion Weddle, Co A, 1st KY State Cavalry does **not** meet the criteria to be designated as the Last Union Soldier of Maricopa County, AZ
- Private Parker Louis Gordon, Co S, 154th IL Infantry remains the currently designated Last Union Soldier for both Maricopa County and the State of Arizona.
- The Department of the Southwest Graves Registration Officer (DGRO) is directed to remove Corporal Weddle from the SUVCW Graves Registration database, as the committee has determined that Weddle's service in the KY State Cavalry does not satisfy the requirements for inclusion.

This by no means, should reduce nor marginalize the sense of pride and respect held by our Brothers and Francis Weddle's descendants, for his service to the cause of liberty and union. Said service just happened to fall outside the specific criteria to qualify for a federal pension.

The Department of the SW continues to welcome any new information that may, in the future, be revealed in our pursuit of the true history of our Nation.

Ordered this 25th day of May 2023

Kenneth J. Hooker, Department Commander



ATTEST,

Department Secretary

Attachment: Last Soldier Project Report and Recommendations

DEPSW 23-0525-001

To: Southwest Department Commander Kenneth Hooker
From: LSP Committee (Irwin, Horton, and Lamb)

Last Soldier Project Report and Recommendations 23-0511

Executive Summary

Per Department Order 03 (Series 2023-2024) dated 13 April 2023 the Department Last Soldier Committee was charged with four tasks. This report is the fourth and last of those tasks.

The First (1) Task was “Determine the SUVCW requirements for a Veteran to be included in the “Last Soldier Project.”

The requirements are found in The SUVCW Graves Registration Database Instructions Manual (2022 Version) and, The LUS National Project Check List Item 7 which requires the Last Soldier be in the database.

The Second(2) Task was to “Review the current list of “Last Known Surviving Union Civil War Veteran in each Arizona County.”

The List Dated 04/21/2023 is accurate, last soldiers are qualified, and posted on the Dept. Website.

The Third (3) Task was to “Conduct research to determine if the following individual meets those requirements for inclusion.

**Corporal Francis Marion Weddle, Co. A, First KY State Cavalry b.
06/12/1847 -d. 04/13/1947.”**

Soldier Weddle does not meet the requirements for inclusion in the data base and therefore is not eligible for the Last Union Soldier Project.

The Fourth (4) Task is the requirement for this Report and Recommendations.

With this Report, All four Tasks have been completed.

Recommendations

- 1. The Committee Recommends that Soldier Francis Marion Weddle of Kentucky be removed from the SUVCW Graves Registration data base.**
- 2. The Committee Recommends that an inquiry be made of the CinC as to an official date for “War” as found in the Graves Registration Manual. (The lack of an official date for the “war” did not hinder the work/findings of the Committee. It is simply felt to be desirable to define such a date range in an instructions manual.)**
- 3. The Committee Recommends that the Dept. Commander issue a General order as follow up to G.O. #3 relaying the findings of the Committee (See Executive Summary).**

Background

Task 1. The SUVCW requirements for a Veteran to be included in the Last Soldier Project can be found first in the LUSP National Project Check List Item 7 that directs as follows:

“Document. This is the primary objective of this project. Part of the submission for funds will be the inclusion of a grave registration form with your request.”

And The SUVCW Graves Registration Database Instructions Manual (2022 Version).

The second page of the instructions states the requirements (in part) as follows:

“There is one record for each Union Veteran whose final resting place has been identified and entered into the DB.”

A veteran is one who was a Soldier, Sailor, Marine, or member of the Revenue Cutter Service of the United States of America, *or in a state militia unit called to active federal service and subject to orders of United States offices at some time during the war and who was regularly mustered and honorably discharged from or died in service.*

(The word “war” was defined in an email from CinC Frail to GRO Frantz as April 12, 1861 through May 26, 1865. However these dates have no impact on his Federal Service of lack thereof.)

This appears to be similar to the Requirements for Membership in the Order which reads (in part):

“All male descendants, whether thorough lineal or collateral line of ages specified in Article VII of this Constitution who are blood relatives of **soldiers, sailors, marines of members of the Revenue Cutter Service, who were regularly mustered and served honorably in, were honorably discharged from, or died in the service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Revenue Cutter Service of the United States of America or such State Regiments as were called into active service and were subject to orders of United States general officers, during the war of the Rebellion between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865;.....shall have eligibility to membership.”**

We conclude that qualification for the Last Soldier includes 1.) Soldier must meet the requirements outlined in the SUVCW Graves Registration Data Base Instructions Manual stated above and (2.) that the soldier must be entered in the DB.

Task 2. The Second(2) Task was to “Review the current list of “Last Known Surviving Union Civil War Veteran in each Arizona County.”

PGRO David Jackson has prepared the list of LUSoldiers in Arizona and New Mexico and these have been posted to our SW Dept. Website.

At the assignment of this Project there was a list dated 10/05/2019. I asked Brother Jackson if that was the latest list and should it contain any changes that he knew of.

Brother Jackson responded with a list dated 12/25/2019. The only change was the LUS in Graham County thus not impacting our discussion of Soldier Weddle.

Subsequently Brother Jackson contacted Brother Burgess and asked him to replace the 12/12/20219 list with the one dated 04/21/2023. He informed

me of this action request during a meeting with me on 04/25/2023. He commented that he thought the old dates might imply that the data was not current.

Brother Burgess has posted it and it is the correct and current information.

Brother Lamb asked Brother Jackson not to make changes to the database without consulting with the Committee in advance.

Brother Jackson described the process he went through to compile these lists. It is tremendous in volume, reflects a total understanding of the requirements and has paid strict attention to the requirement for Federal Service, although he often describes it as "Service in the Army".

Brother Jackson also schooled Brother Lamb in how to simply and quickly enter the database after I described my difficulties. The basic key is correct spelling of the Surname. That will enter the full database for that surname. Initially more filled fields is not better and often returns no returns.

Task 3. Our research shows that Soldier Weddle does not meet the Qualifications for registration in the Grave Registration Data Base.

This judgment is based solely on the requirement that his Kentucky State Unit be called to "active federal service". It was not and therefore Soldier Weddle is not eligible for the LUMP.

The evidence for that conclusion is based on the report of "Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky, 1866."

The report contains several Schedules. Schedule A "contains the individual history of each officer and enlisted man from the State mustered into the United States Service by companies and regiments...". Schedule B "is Similar to A but only embraces State troops, not militia proper..."

The other Schedules are not pertinent.

Soldier Weddle can be found in Schedule B. under Co. A First Kentucky Cavalry. Soldier Weddle is not found among those "mustered into United States Service.."in Schedule A.